

What is claimed is:

1. A fluid separation unit and manifold assembly, said separation unit comprising a housing having an inlet, an outlet spaced from said inlet, and separation means within said housing between said inlet and said outlet;

said manifold comprising a first portion having a fluid path for fluid communication with said separation unit through said inlet, a second portion having a fluid path for fluid communication with said separation unit through said outlet;

said separation unit housing having a valve having an open position and a closed position, said valve being in said closed position and preventing the escape of fluid from said housing when said housing is disengaged from said manifold, and being in said open position and allowing fluid communication between said housing and one of said first or second portion of said manifold when said housing is engaged with said manifold.

2. The separation unit and manifold assembly of claim 1, wherein said valve comprises biasing means for biasing said valve in said closed position, said valve further comprising a valve stem, and wherein said manifold comprises an actuator for actuating said valve stem against said biasing means so that said valve is in said open position.

3. The separation unit and manifold assembly of claim 1, wherein said separation unit housing further comprises a second valve having an open position and a closed position, said second valve being in said closed position and preventing the escape of fluid from said housing when said housing is disengaged from said manifold, and being in said open position and allowing fluid communication between

said housing and the other of said first and second portion of said manifold when said housing is engaged with said manifold.

4. The separation unit and manifold assembly of claim 1, wherein said valve comprises a spherical portion, and wherein said second portion of said manifold comprises a recess for receiving said spherical portion, said recess accommodating swiveling of said spherical portion therein.

5. The separation unit and manifold assembly of claim 1, wherein said separation means comprises a filter.